

ALCOA ALUMINA REFINERY — WAGERUP — PRODUCTION LICENCE

956. Hon LYNN MacLAREN to the minister representing the Minister for Environment:

I refer to the licence amendment application for production increase to 2.85 million metric tonnes per annum at Alcoa Australia's Wagerup refinery.

- (1) Will the minister please table the findings of any independent studies carried out since 2006 that identify the potential harmful effects of dust on the health of residents in Yarloop, Waroona, Harvey, Cookernup and Wagerup?
- (2) What is the rationale for lifting licence condition 4?
- (3) In the absence of scientific evidence into health impacts resulting from Alcoa's activities, does the minister agree that the precautionary principle should be implemented?
- (4) When is the licence appeal process expected to be completed?

Hon DONNA FARAGHER replied:

I thank the member for some notice of the question.

- (1) The Department of Environment Regulation assessed the risk of fugitive dust impacts from Alcoa's Wagerup alumina refinery in October 2015 when it amended the premises' licence. The department's assessment is documented in the decision document accompanying the licence published on the department's website. I table those documents. The department advises it is not aware of any independent studies carried out since 2006 that specifically consider the potentially harmful effects of dust on the health of residents in Yarloop, Waroona, Harvey, Cookernup and Wagerup.
- (2) Condition A4 relating to fugitive dust was removed from Alcoa's Wagerup alumina refinery licence in October 2015. The department's assessment and decision to remove the condition is documented in the tabled decision document accompanying the licence published on the department's website. The assessment concluded —

Fugitive dust emissions can be adequately regulated via the general provisions of the EP Act —

The Environmental Protection Act 1986 —

with particular reference to s49 of the EP Act. DER expects that Alcoa will continue to have multilayered dust control measures (refer to summary in section 7 of the 2012 LTRMS).

That is the long-term residue management strategy. The assessment continues —

Alcoa is expected to continue implementation of its dust control strategies regardless of whether fugitive dust is regulated via a condition or the general provisions of the EP Act

The department advises that Alcoa undertakes dust control measures as set out in the published decision document and removal of the relevant condition does not reduce the level of these controls or the monitoring for dust emissions that remain in place.

- (3) As the appeal of licence conditions is being investigated by the Appeals Convenor, it is not appropriate that the minister comments in response to this question.
- (4) See answer (3).

[See paper 4509.]